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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the transfer student. The first section includes a brief review of what we know about the 2-year college student followed by a discussion of the types of transfers. Examples of frequently asked student questions are presented with each type to enable conference groups to gain an immediate perspective of problems from the student's point of view. A description of several nontraditional programs attractive to transfer students concludes the first section. The second section is devoted to results of stage two of the Exxon Education Foundation-sponsored research project: Evaluation and Application of Community College Transfer Credits and Courses by Senior Colleges and Universities focusing on reactions of pre-transfers and transfers. (MJM)

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THE TRANSFER STUDENT DIMENSION OF ARTICULATION

Section I: The Transfer - Who Is He and What Do We Know About Him?
Section II: The EXXON Project Examines the Transfer Student

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Topic: The Transfer Student

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Section I

The Transfer--Who is He and What Do We Know About Him?

For the transfer student, the process of articulation is surrounded by confusion and complication. As the Association Transfer Group who planned this Conference agreed, the problems are due partly to semantic and definitional uncertainties.[1] Who is the transfer student? Which classification are you referring to--the immediate high school graduate, serviceman, veteran, minority, older adult? The anecdotal rather than statistical nature of his reactions is an added complication. His experience, good and bad, is completely individualized in his view, but he is often quick to make broad and general applications to entire institutions.

The student should be the center of any discussion about transfer. As Douglas Conner observed, he is the real middleman in higher education.[2] When the system breaks down and communication slows or fails, he is caught in the middle. He is the one who suffers, not the faculty and administration. Unless someone intercedes for him--an ombudsman perhaps--the student is practically powerless to effect change. A position taken by planners of this Conference

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1. W. Todd Furniss and Marie Y. Martin, "Toward Solving Transfer Problems," (unpublished paper), 1973.
2. J. Douglas Conner. Book Review of Middleman in Higher Education. Educational Record, 54:3, pp. 249-250.

should be reiterated: colleges and universities have a social and even legal responsibility to provide a good product, to advertise it honestly, to advise the student adequately and to eliminate practices that erect and maintain unnecessary barriers to the student achieving his goals.

This paper, prepared for small-group consideration at the Conference, focuses on the transfer student. The material is presented in two sections. The first section includes a brief review of what we know about the two-year college student, followed by a discussion of the types of transfers. Examples of frequently asked student questions are presented with each type to enable Conference groups to gain an immediate perspective of problems from the student's point of view. A description of several nontraditional programs attractive to transfer students concludes the first section. The second section is devoted to results of stage two of the Exxon Education Foundation-sponsored research project: Evaluation and Application of Community College Transfer Credits and Courses by Senior Colleges and Universities* focussing on reactions of pre-transfers and transfers.

While considerable research attention continues to be given to the community college student--his origins, composite personality and abilities, interests, aspirations, successes, and future needs--almost no information is available on his attitudes and values as they pertain to transfer.

Summary of Research

In 1968, Cross synthesized principal investigations: the most significant of the studies considered in her report were the efforts of Trent and

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*The first stage completed in 1972 and reported in book form was primarily concerned with the identification and evaluation of articulation models found in the fifty states: Frederick C. Kintzer. Middleman in Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973.

Medsker (1964-65), Cooley and Becker's Project Talent (completed in 1966), and the SCOPE research directed by Tillery and others (School to College: Opportunities for Postsecondary Education, reported initially in 1966 and 1968). In her summary statement dealing with the intellectual dimension, Cross warned that present research instruments do not accurately measure the two-year college student who does not fit the tradition. The inevitable result, she concludes, is that

> ...we picture America's newest college student as being less adequate than his peers at the tasks of higher education--tasks which have been developed over the years for a different type of student. We must conclude that intellectual dimensions sharply differentiate junior college students, as a group, from senior college students. The junior college student is less able--on our present tests; he is less intellectually oriented--on our present measurement; and he is less motivated to seek higher education--in our traditional colleges.[3]

Empirical studies conducted in the mid-sixties by the American College Testing Program's Research and Development Division reach similar conclusions:

> Findings concerning the academic potential of junior college students are not surprising. The "open door" admissions policy of most junior colleges could be expected to result in a lower average level of academic ability than that of four-year colleges. In overall academic potential, junior college students in this study averaged about one-half a standard deviation below four-year college freshmen; the average junior college freshman would rank at about

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3 K. Patricia Cross, The Junior College Student: A Research Description. Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1968, p. 53.

the 30th percentile of the four-year college group.[4]

Two-year colleges tended to have fewer students of high intellectual capacity than four-year institutions however talent was defined.

Test scores and high school grades used in the ACT research also indicated overlap. Many junior college students had higher aptitude than the average senior college student; and conversely, many in senior colleges had lower aptitude than the average student in junior college. The conclusion reached was that

> The two-year colleges are more diverse within their institutions and the four-year colleges are more diverse among their institutions.[5]

The comprehensive ACT research study also computed correlations between student body characteristics and institutionalized environments. In choosing institutions, two-year college students were also found to be more influenced by practical considerations than by intellectual or social emphasis:

> Students entering a junior college are influenced more by practical considerations and less by intellectual or social emphasis in choosing their college. Similarly, they are more concerned with the instrumental value of college for a higher income and less concerned with personal intellectual development. As we would expect, they tend to aspire to less than a B.A. degree and to reject graduate training as a goal. Similarly, they tend to major in business, agriculture, or fields not included in a list more suitable for students at four-year colleges, and

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4. The Two-Year College and Its Students. (Monograph Two), Iowa City: The American College Testing Program, 1969, p. 117.

5. Ibid., p. 104.

they are less interested in the humanities, science, or the social sciences. Except for intercollegiate athletics, they have less expectation of participating in extracurricular activities. The exception may result, in part, from the growing tendency of four-year colleges to request academically marginal athletes to go to a two-year college for a year or two and then transfer to the four-year school.

...two-year colleges attract pragmatic students seeking vocational training; they are less attractive to talented students who are intellectually and academically oriented, who plan a degree in one of the traditional subject areas, and who expect to take part in a wide variety of activities in college.[6]

In a recent investigation of massive proportions, Trent and associates summarized the existing body of research on the community college student:

Those students who attend community colleges manifest less measured academic aptitude and less academic motivation as exhibited by such factors as the late decision to attend college, lack of interest in being there, and uncertainty about completing their program. They come from a broader, but generally lower, socioeconomic status. They are less introspective, less self-directed toward articulated goals, and less knowledgeable about alternative goals, whether in reference to careers or education; they are, moreover, less likely to realize their goals. They show less interest in ideas and abstractions and are generally less intellectually disposed and less autonomous in their thinking and attitudes;

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6. Ibid., p. 80.

> they are also less prone to change on these dimensions. They show less originality, fewer signs of leadership, and less involvement with college extracurricular or community activities. They are much less likely to persist in college beyond two years and are more likely to take longer than four years to obtain their baccalaureate degree if they do transfer to a four-year college. Perhaps more important, there do not appear to be programs or policies numerous or sufficient enough to help students deal with these problems.[7]

Notice that the final sentence--not enough programs or appropriate policies--is a constant complaint of transfer students.

Since the widely recognized Knoell-Medsker investigations, comparatively little attention has been given to transfer-native student success comparisons. Recent studies are restricted to single institutions and individual disciplines. Such evidence scattered around the country supports the generalization that community college lower divisions have long since proved their worth in preparing students for transfer. I will cite a single report for discussion purposes--a g.p.a. analysis of 1971-72 Los Angeles City College transfers to seven campuses of the University of California. In discussion results, Gold refers both to high school "eligibles" (B averages in certain high school subjects) and "ineligibles" (below "B" averages):

> L.A.C.C. transfers in 1971-72 to the University of California performed well, as have their predecessors for the past fifteen years. The 121 students ineligible for admission to the University as freshmen set an all-time record with a 2.83 grade point average

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7. James W. Trent (Principal Investigator), The Study of Junior Colleges, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, Vol. II, December, 1972, p. 5.

at the University. Not far behind (2.80) were the 40 "eligibles." Both groups, however, also set another record in their L.A.C.C. performance, with each group averaging over a B average, making the differential in performance between the two institutions -.28 for the eligibles, and -.21 for the ineligibles.[8]

Los Angeles City College, like many other two-year colleges, is salvaging increasing numbers of low-income students who, without a community college opportunity, would have little chance to start a traditional collegiate program, much less to transfer. L.A.C.C. students selected for the federally-funded Special Services Program in 1971-72 were also low-achievers classified as University of California "ineligibles." In addition to financial aid, they were provided counseling and tutorial assistance. Although their grade point differential was less than that of "regular" transfers, two-thirds of the 69 students averaged above "C" for the year at UCLA. They seemed to be better in courses requiring verbal rather than quantitative skills.[9]

These are the "New Students of the 1970's" as defined by Cross, Knoell, and other researchers--low-achieving, low-income, and belonging mostly to minority ethnic groups.

Types of Transfers

According to statistical information recently released by the Chronicle of Higher Education, about 500,000 students are switching colleges annually.

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8. Ben K. Gold, "Academic Performance of L.A.C.C. Transfers Entering the University of California during the Academic Year 1971-72," (Research Study #73-3), Los Angeles City College, February 1973, p. 10.

9. Ben K. Gold, "Academic Performance of L.A.C.C. Transfers to UCLA Through the Special Services Program, 1971-72," (Research Study #73-13), Los Angeles City College, October 1972, pp. 6-7.

Transfer types characterizing the 1973 scene include the "drop-down" or reverse transfer, the "stop-out" or returning transfer, and the intercollege-inter-university transfer. Diversity and mobility are dominant features of both groups. Despite the tendency of state legislatures and senior colleges to increase tuition and fees, the itinerant student population continues to rise annually. In 1968, more than one million students enrolled in out-of-state institutions and, more pertinent to this discussion, the number of new transfer students is approaching 10 percent of the total undergraduate population.[10]

The increasing diversity and mobility of the transfer population aggravate long-standing problems associated with institutional bookkeeping systems, causing even greater delays and compounding inaccuracies and inequities. Articulation systems are geared to traditional time frames and, in other ways as well, they lack the flexibility to cope with the demands of the changing transfer population.

The "Drop-down" or Reverse Transfer

The students returning to community college after unsuccessful university attempts are arriving in ever-increasing numbers. Although interest and concern seem to be high, information on the reverse transfer is difficult to find. In 1967-68, public community colleges in Illinois reported more reverse transfer students than transfers, actually receiving more than they sent. Also, more students were transferring from private four-year to public two-year colleges than to public four-year institutions. North Carolina recently experienced a similar overbalance of reverse transfers.
In fall 1971, drop-downs outnumbered regular transfers. Needless to say, they

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10. L. K. Kojaku, "Student Migration and Transfer of Credit." (Unpublished paper), March 1973.

pose a real threat to the equilibrium of articulation systems.

Questions

The drop-down, fresh from an unsuccessful and probably unhappy university experience, wonders:

(1) What strings are attached to my admission to community college? Am I on probation? special probation? How do I get off?

(2) Can I repeat courses here that I flunked at the university, and if so, will a passing grade be acknowledged by the university?

(3) When can I be considered for university readmission? Are admission requirements now stiffer because I didn't attend the community college first?

(4) What happens if I take community college work on a pass-fail basis? How will a "pass" credit transfer?

(5) I would like to go to another university. What are my chances?

(6) How much do I lose if I change majors?

(7) Are credits earned in university courses for which I have a "D" grade acceptable at the community college? If not, can I raise that grade by repeating courses? Will both the university and community college accept the repeated course grade?

The "Stop-out" or Returning Transfer

This person characterized by nonenrollment periods and part-time studies is already an important factor in the complicated world of transfer. Except for isolated situations, practically nothing is known about the returning transfer. Institutional statistics do not isolate the stop-out to allow gross counting of this group.

A study of far-reaching significance is currently under way in California. Sponsored by the Coordinating Council for Higher Education (with

Dorothy M. Knoell, the chief investigator), this major research effort, covering a seven-semester or ten-quarter span, focusses on the origins and persistence of a randomly selected group of the state's two-year college students. From a sample of approximately 30,000 new California community college students, rates of persistence, transfer, reentry, and graduation will be developed, and subgroups including persisters, transfers, dropouts, and stop-outs will be compared. Employment experiences of community college dropouts included in the sample will be examined to determine, for example, if former occupational-education majors are more successful in obtaining jobs than former general-education majors. Shifting career objectives of the stop-outs and the degree of their success after reentering higher education will be recorded.

Proposed outcomes related to transfer programs are particularly relevant to the study to be discussed here: uncovering problems such as transfer barriers associated with interrupting smooth student flow, and suggesting ways to overcome them.

Questions

Questions pertaining to acceptance of long-standing credits are uppermost in the minds of the returning transfer:

(1) Can I transfer credits earned in the 1950s at the same university? or a different senior college?

(2) The first college I attended is no longer in existence, but I do have a transcript. What will happen to all that credit?

(3) Do the new graduation policies apply to me? I've been away for ten years.

The Intercollege-Interuniversity Transfer

Little is known about a rapidly growing group, the intercollegiate-

interuniversity transfers, who move from one senior college or university to another. Particularly bothersome in large state systems, these students--many appearing to be professional "change artists" to registrars and admission officers--present tremendous bookkeeping problems. In a 1972 study of the transfer student phenomenon (the most comprehensive investigation in recent years), nearly half the total number of students transferring nationally in 1970 were inter-senior college itinerants.[11]

Primarily because of the sheer numbers of them, state systems, including the University of California and the California State Universities and Colleges, have placed severe limitations on intercampus transfers. A similar situation also exists in multi-unit community colleges. These constraining measures have frequently included relatively severe unit losses. In areas of population density, the intercampus transfer has, in fact, become an "unwanted citizen." Poor communication, a constant problem in such districts, frequently affects intercampus transfer. Credit loss during the process of intercampus transfer is not uncommon, particularly in large multi-unit districts. Where status rivalry dominates decision making, articulation arrangements are not likely to be student-centered.

Questions

The intercollege transfer faces all the difficulties of other itinerant students, but some problems are unique to him. For example:

(1) If the various campuses in the same multiuniversity have different graduation requirements, must he complete a separate set of requirements to graduate from the second campus?

(2) Is he caught in the trap of residency requirements?

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11. A.Sandeen and G. Goodale, "Student Personnel Programs and the Transfer Student," National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Journal, No. 9, 1972.

(3) Is it possible to take work simultaneously on more than one campus in the system?

(4) Will all the courses taken in his major count at the other campus?

(5) Will his financial aid grant transfer to the new campus along with his credits?

The Vocational-Technical Education Major

Although the plight of the vocational major who wants to transfer to his state university is slowly improving, the "similar course" rule is rigidly observed in most senior colleges and universities; i.e., "unless we offer the same course or a similar one, credit will not be extended." Leading universities, where the greatest number apply for transfer admission, do not offer this type of training. Some are beginning to relinquish the negative reaction to vocational credit transfer. What may be vocational for one may well be avocational or breadth experience for another.

While scattered within states, universities in 20 states now accept such credit. Insitutions in Washington, including the University and State University, are among the leaders in granting at least elective credit for work taken in vocational-technical fields.[12] A greater flexibility is, of course, evident in senior institutions that offer baccalaureate and advanced degrees in semi-professional areas, notably in North Carolina. For several years, the University of West Florida (one of several upper-level institutions in that state) has accepted complete vocational-technical curricula and from these courses it has formulated baccalaureate programs on an individual basis.

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12. Frederick C. Kintzer, op. cit.

Transfer acceptance of vocational-technical or occupational courses may well be hastened through the work of the Commission on Accreditation of Service Experiences. The 1968 edition of "A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services," published by CASE, contains credit recommendations for over 8800 formal, service-school training programs. The Guide is not used by admissions officers to make their determination on granting credit for such courses as general drafting and automotive repair.[13] This organization was established in 1945 by the American Council on Education to evaluate military educational programs and provide recommendations on granting credit for work that is essentially occupational. Its publication is a possible model for institutional agreements.

The Question

For reasons mentioned earlier, the transfer is seldom given credit--even elective credit--for vocational-technical courses. Any course, in fact, that emphasizes application is usually suspect by "name" universities. Questions asked by occupational majors hoping to complete a baccalaureate degree point to the central issue. Why won't my vocational-technical education credits transfer from community college?

Questions presented in previous sections as major concerns of transfer students identify problem areas which are major complications in the development of articulation agreements. On the university-senior college side are the tendencies to:

1. Formalize curricular changes arbitrarily and suddenly rather than cooperatively and with reasonable lead time (perhaps 18 months) extended to transfer institutions.

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13. Burt, S. M., The Dilemma of the College Undergraduate Transfer Student: Implications for National Policy Relating to Higher Education. Washington, D.C.: Federal Interagency Committee on Education Task Force on Transfer of Credits in Higher Education, 1972.

2. Insist on detailed community college course investigation and an exact equivalency before granting transfer credit.
3. Refuse to consider acceptance of occupational-type courses which, in fact, may have value for baccalaureate degrees, i.e., data processing, agriculture, police science, aviation, real estate, etc., and exact limitations on the amount of transfer credit to certain fields, i.e., business education, physical education and music.
4. Shift courses from lower to upper division, and in general obliterate the separation between these two divisions while holding community colleges to specific definitions of lower and upper division.
5. Allow colleges, schools, or departments within the university to set widely differing requirements for major fields and for graduation.
6. Examine community college courses but not those of other senior colleges whose students seek transfer--thereby operating by a double standard.
7. Require a higher grade point average for transfers than for native students to enter upper division work.
8. Ignore orientation programs for the transfer students.
9. Make the associate degree, where it is accepted per se, an absolute requirement for university admission.

Community colleges may:

1. Develop transfer courses without the cooperative consultation of senior institutions.

2. Fail to establish a system of managing articulation within the institution itself.
3. Rely on informal communication between community college professors and university professors rather than between counselors, or other designated articulation specialists.
4. Fail to offer prerequisites for a course normally regarded as intermediate or specialized, or if prerequisites are determined, fail to mention them in requests for recognition of the course.
5. Submit for university degree credit courses which contain a mixture of subcollegiate and collegiate materials.
6. Fail to provide adequate transfer guidelines to students either through the counseling staff or by printed information.

Some of these issues are due to differences in institutional philosophies. Others tend to be locked in traditional patterns of admission, registration, scheduling and grading. Some point to the need for better trained personnel. Most indicate the lack of consideration for students.

Transfer Potential in Nontraditional Programs

Although consideration of nontraditional programs is beyond the scope of this paper on "The Student Dimension," we shall cover briefly those programs in which students can earn an associate degree. An assumption associated with the development of nontraditional programs is that an individual who successfully completes a recognized type of independent study on or off campus, full or part time, should be eligible for a degree equal to that awarded by the traditional university. Thousands of nontraditional students are currently so engaged, hoping to reach this goal.

Both in current usage and in potential as a model for cooperative

efforts between and among nontraditional programs and for extending the flexibility of traditional programs, the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) is most significant. In his 1972 report prepared for the Task Force on Transfer Credits in Higher Education, Burt gives a rather detailed account of the development of this program and other efforts in the nontraditional-external degree area.[14]

Many of you are well acquainted with CLEP, which offers 34 subject and five general examinations. Almost 2000 colleges and universities are currently participating, but only a few are as yet willing to confer an associate degree or allow two full years of credit for the entire test battery. The wide use of CLEP examinations by servicemen and women is achieving impressive proportions and thereby encouraging changes in transfer admission policies.

The Regents External Degree Program sponsored by the University of the State of New York is attracting an increasing number of transfer students. A total of 3500 are currently enrolled, of whom half have attended at least one college or university. Of the 613 graduates of the associate degree program 18 percent have actually attended three or more institutions. More than 50 percent of the graduates have transferred to traditional colleges and universities and an additional 10 percent are enrolled in nontraditional post-secondary educational institutions. These figures, supplied by Donald J. Nolan, Associate Commissioner for Academic Programs, New York State Department of Education, suggests the versatility and flexibility of the External Degree Program. Credits earned in formal college study and from a variety of examination programs may be applied toward a regents' degree.

The Servicemen's Opportunity College concept does not itself represent

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14. Ibid. Chapters 4 and 5.

a special degree program, but does require member community colleges to liberalize requirements for both admission and graduation. In the first full year of operation (1972), over 80 community colleges, junior colleges, and technical institutes changed policies to meet the educational needs of servicemen.[15]

To become Servicemen's Opportunity Colleges, the schools must agree to other conditions. For example, they must provide opportunities for servicemen to take courses on base with time schedules that do not conflict with their military obligations. Institutions agree to grant maximum credit for relevant USAFI courses and for successfully completed CLEP and CPEP examinations, and to adapt residency requirements to special needs of servicemen. A "contract for degree" is an available option. A reverse transfer policy is maintained in the contract enabling the individual to transfer credits earned at other institutions back to the "contract institution."[16]

The U.S. Navy and Air Force are both developing programs to maximize educational opportunities for service personnel. In cooperation with SOC and other educational and accreditation organizations, the Navy is presently implementing its "Navy Campus for Achievement Prototype Plan." The basic objectives are similar to those established for SOC institutional membership:

1. Facilitate transferability of academic credit.
2. Maximize academic credit for Navy courses and training (75 per cent of the total lower-division requirement may be earned through nontraditional sources).
3. Eliminate residency requirements.

15. "Vantage Point" (for servicemen and veterans) February 1973, insert sheet.
16. Robert J. Leo, James W. Hinson, Jr., Fred L. Wellman, and Lee J. Betts, The Servicemen's Opportunity College. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Community Junior Colleges (Program for Veterans and Servicemen), June 1972.

4. Establish a network of education counselors.

5. Provide appropriate academic degrees using the CASE (Commission on Accreditation of Service Experiences) guidelines of the American Council on Education.[17]

Directors of the plan also expect to develop a centralized recordkeeping transcript system.

The U.S. Air Force is engaged in similar activities. Its "Community College of the Air Force" is planned as the basic administrative umbrella for technical schools located on Air Force bases. The central purpose behind the CCAF is to translate the various technical programs maintained by the Air Force into acceptable credit toward formal academic degrees.[18]

A proposition now under study by the Servicemen's Opportunity College Advisory Committee deals directly with the transfer student; criteria have been developed for senior colleges and university membership in the SOC Program. It is possible that credits earned in two-year Servicemen's Opportunity Colleges might in the future be accepted by some senior institutions.

The next part of this paper will examine transfer procedures from the student's point of view.

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17. Chief of Naval Training, "Navy Campus for Achievement - Prototype Plan," Chief of Naval Training, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, 1973.

18. Colonel John L. Phipps, "Development of a Community College of the Air Force." Air Training Command, Randolph AFB, Texas, 1972.

Section II

The Exxon Project Examines the Transfer Student

Out of the many problems and conflicts found in even the best planned transfer policy, the investigation of the Exxon Project, as mentioned earlier, chose to concentrate on: Evaluation and Application of Community College Transfer Credits and Courses by Senior Colleges and Universities. In the second stage, special attention was given to the reactions of transfers and pre-transfers.

The Project set out to discover the impressions and attitudes of transfer and pre-transfer students and to identify specific problems experienced or anticipated by them. Impressions and attitudes were sought on the quality of instruction, counseling, and orientation in community colleges and universities, and reasons for choosing community colleges. Data collected provided a glimpse of how groups of transfer and transfer-bound students view the system and their particular situations. Other information reported by the groups will be touched on, including biographic profiles, location and type of high schools, academic ranks, associate degrees, and time of decision to attend college. The total review should give an impression of the traditional transfer student of 1973 and his own views of articulation.

Two questionnaires were developed for this investigation. One was directed to upper-division or graduate students who have transferred from

community colleges (Group 1), and the other to community college students who expect to transfer to a two- or four-year college or university (Group 2). A total of 2000 forms were sent and 1435 were returned: 747 from transfers and 688 from pre-transfers; 30 universities and 24 community colleges were represented, including two universities and two community colleges in Canada.

Limitations of this type of research are readily apparent. Since institutional coordinators were asked to develop sampling procedures appropriate to their particular situations, selection techniques varied. In institutions where samplings were not randomized, student commitment to transfer was emphasized. Students with little interest in transferring were generally not included in the samples. Of the hundreds, or in some cases even thousands, who transfer at a particular time, relatively few responses were obtained in the target institutions. Limitations in selection, control, size, and scope obviously restrict the interpretation of the data. No attempt in the description will be made to contrive generalizations or make judgments about specific institutions or particular groups of students. The anecdotal nature of student responses limits the generalizability of the material, but the informal conversations and free-response comments are used to embellish impressions.

Target Groups--Background Information

About 56 percent of the transfers (Group 1) and 60 percent of those contemplating transfer (Group 2) were males; roughly 85 percent of both groups were Caucasian. A few more Blacks were in the Group 2 sample than in Group 1 (8 percent as contrasted to 4 percent) and a few more Orientals were in Group 1 (5 percent versus 2 percent) than in Group 2. Less than 1 percent of the community college sample was Chicano or Indian. These two races were not represented in the transfer group (Group 1). The ages in Group 1 ranged from

19 to 54; in Group 2, from 18 to 51. Most of the community college participants were 18 and 19, and the university transfers were 21 and 22 years of age. It should be noted that 20 percent of the community college students were 25 years years of age or older.

Over two-thirds of those having transferred listed themselves as having majored in business or commercial subjects in high school. About one-fourth had taken college preparatory courses. Only six percent had majored in vocational-technical subjects. Group 2 was similar: not quite two-thirds had taken business or commercial; one-third, college preparatory; and 4 percent, vocational-technical.

Those attending institutions in small communities or rural areas appeared to be contemplating careers in business and service occupations; i.e., teaching, social work, and nursing. The large-city or metropolitan-area students often saw themselves in the professions--medicine, law, engineering--or as corporate executives. Consistency of major field commitment was also typical of these students. Firmly established career goals characterized responses of this group. In contrast, many presently enrolled in small, rural-area schools freely admitted their intention to make career decisions as late as possible. These students, as further identified in the free response sections, appeared to be less dedicated to goals decided earlier.

Well over three-quarters of both groups claimed they ranked in the top half of high school graduating classes. In both cases, about one-fifth were evidently in the top tenth of high school graduates. The fact that a substantial number of high-ranking high school graduates choose to attend community college is again emphasized in this nationwide, though small, sampling.

Decision to Go to College

When during their careers did the students decide to attend college?

Early decision making seemed to be the rule. About 60 percent had apparently begun making plans by early high school. In many institutions a substantial number checked "while in elementary school": almost one-half of the Broward Community College (Florida) and Lincoln Land Community College (Illinois) group; and over one-third at Western Washington College, Centralia College, and Washington State University. Few of those reporting appeared to be concerned about career choice decisions. Community college students who had no definite career in mind seemed to feel that there would be plenty of time to settle that matter on reaching the upper division level. Even juniors in universities who had changed majors and career plans one or more times voiced little concern over their apparent indecision. Few of the respondents seemed to choose their career in the likelihood of finding jobs plentiful in their chosen field. It was also rare to find the transfer student voicing doubts about his ability to succeed in the field into which his college education would eventually lead him.

Reactions to Some Quality Questions

Responses to reasons for choosing to attend a two-year institution provided few surprises. "Low cost" and "closeness to home" invariably led the list as most important reasons. Most frequently in third position was "type of program (course) offered," followed by "work opportunities" and "inadequate preparation." Least important reasons could also be easily anticipated: "athletic opportunities," "extracurricular activities," and "social life." "Advice of parents" was middle range in importance, but choosing a two-year college on the recommendation of a counselor or teacher was a less popular reason. Both groups of students, in general, appeared to favor the two-year college for its practical benefits rather than because family or professionals advised it.

This guarded reaction to community college teacher and counselor advice

was also evident in reactions to quality questions. On the whole, student ratings of community college teachers were higher than ratings of counselors. The former ranged from "good to excellent"; the latter seldom reached higher than "fair." On teaching, the transfer group commonly complained about teaching assistants--their poor preparation and inexperience. As one transfer commented, "Three out of five of my instructors at the university were graduate assistants. Only one had anything like the level of knowledge he needed to handle the subject."

A number of statements were submitted in the free-response sections indicating that professors appeared to be primarily interested in theory and research and "could not care less about me." One transfer who must have been particularly disillusioned stated:

> I have learned to detest the school (university). Teachers here, with their fancy degrees, aren't teachers at all. They think more of research than anything else.

Incompetent counseling at both the community college and the university was a common complaint. Much of the difficulty encountered before and after transfer was laid to inadequate counseling. Many stated flatly that counselors simply did not know the answers and gave wrong advice. Similar charges were made against faculty adviser and professional counselor alike:

> My community college counselor advised me to see the "Dean of Transfer Students." He doesn't exist. I thought my community college adviser was absolutely hopeless. I wasted 14 hours of courses in C.C. because of misadvisement.
>
> I took six years instead of four years to complete my B.A. because of poor counseling.

While some of the complaints were probably based more on impressions than real evidence, the consistency of the negative comments suggests that transfer advisement leaves much to be desired.

Students themselves must share in the blame for this general lack of consistent and accurate counseling. As a counselor might put it, "If they don't come to see us, we certainly won't be of help." Conversations recently held supplementary to the inquiries suggest that castigating advisers and counselors might be "the thing to do" or that the complaints are multiplied and magnified from single situations. The complaints mentioned consistently have indeed been heard before, e.g., "Material in university courses was repetitive"; "The regular university students registered first and we got what was left"; "I wanted one campus and was assigned to another." Whatever the reason in particular institutions, the fact remains that communication is, in general, less than satisfactory between adviser-counselors and students. Colleges should take stock.

Evidence suggested that some community colleges overcounsel transfers. In the words of one student respondent:

> I was too spoonfed at C.C., so it took me some time to settle even scheduling problems at the University.

After having been led too carefully, this fellow was able to stand on his own at the university, where counseling assistance is apt to be minimal.

Relying on friends rather than on advisers was a popular response of both pre-transfers and transfers: "Get close to a guy who knows the ropes." A new university transfer, who evidently has it made, was relieved that he had no problems, but he thought that was solely because he had a lot of friends in the "big time."

Why not take advantage of peer loyalty? Buddy tutoring and other types

of student advising techniques are now rather widely used. Several of these are identified by O'Banion, including a unique system of academic advising featuring video-taping developed at Grossmont College, California, and small-group orientation sessions at Flint Community Junior College, Michigan.[19] Decentralization of community college counseling centers has long been advocated by Matson, Collins, and others. Collins suggests putting counselors where the action is, perhaps in individual centers where they can team up with faculty colleagues.[20]

Most universities participating in the survey have orientation programs, but they include both freshmen and transfers. Only about a third were reported by the students to have special orientation for transfers. A high degree of participation was claimed by respondents at the University of Massachusetts, Michigan State University, the University of Kentucky, Northern Illinois University, and SUNY Rutgers. University orientation programs were rated in the middle range of effectiveness. Few evaluations were placed at the extremes of the scale.

Community college transfers are expected to compete on an equal basis with third-year university students. Many feel handicapped primarily through lack of knowledge of university procedures. Realistic orientation programs must fill this gap.

University transfers were asked several additional quality questions: (1) How would you rate the quality of students at the community college as compared to those at the university? (2) How hard do you find it to earn good grades at the university compared with the college from which you transferred? and (3) In general, how do you feel about the university now? Is it a good school for you to be attending?

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19. Terry O'Banion, "Exceptional Practices in Community Junior College." In O'Banion and Thurston, Student Development Programs in the Community Junior College. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972, pp. 184-192.

20. Charles C. Collins. "Student Characteristics and Their Implication for Student Personnel Work." In O'Banion, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

Students Compare Each Other. Reactions of transfers were mixed. Few rated their former community college colleagues as "excellent" or "very poor." Most checked the middle quality rankings--"fair" to "good"--to compare two- and four-year college students.

Comparative Difficulty in Earning Grades. Here again the reactions were mixed. Grade getting at universities was considered about as difficult (or perhaps a little more so) as in community colleges. Many commented on the amount of material covered in university courses. As one transfer in a large midwestern institution put it, "The main difference between community college and university classrooms is more quantity at the university." He was, of course, comparing lower- and upper-division work. Some referred to a change in the type of work expected and examinations given at the university: more term papers, considerably more reading, and in some cases a change from predominantly objective to essay tests. One community college graduate recommended during an interview that a special course on how to write essays be required of all pre-transfers. He also advised practice in writing term papers or at least familiarity with library reference techniques.

How Transfers Feel About the University. Most of the transfers reacted favorably to the question, about two-thirds reporting that the university was a "very good" or at least a "fairly good" institution for them. Many gripes were written in the comment sections of the form. In addition to negative reactions to size ("I was thrown by the immensity of the campus") and to impersonality ("I couldn't get used to every professor cataloging me as a number"), transfers complained, some bitterly, about "the stigma against transfers." Although these allegations were seldom expressed in specific terms, the feelings were obviously real. Referring apparently to the lack of attention paid transfers, one university transfer said that he felt "crippled into believing I would fail." Another said, "As a transfer

I got caught in the middle. It was hard to find other transfers. We are just not like the regulars."

In one university, transfers were not allowed in honors programs. In another, applicants from community colleges had to have a better g.p.a. than the native students. These discriminatory practices and others identified in an earlier section are still condoned in some universities in different parts of the nation.

Transfers and Pre-transfers Rate Their Problems

Both groups--those having transferred and those anticipating transfer--were asked to rate the severity of each of 25 commonly identified problem areas. The most serious, it was thought, would be related to credit and course denial and other aspects of program articulation. Among community college students anticipating transfer, six of the eight most frequently mentioned future fears had direct bearing on the transfer policy and procedural matters. The transfers, however, tended to show greater concern for items clearly related to personal relationships and conditions, as shown by the following quotes:

1. Expenses at the university are greater, presenting a serious problem for me.
2. I can't locate my university adviser when I need help.
3. I find it harder to make good grades; my university professors expect more work than their community college counterparts.
4. Opportunities for employment are limited.
5. I have difficulty in scheduling required courses.
6. I have trouble using the library.

7. My study habits seem to be inadequate (note taking, reading speed, writing term papers, taking essay examinations).

8. The size of the university bothers me.

Financing university education was the overriding concern of most of the transfers, fully two-thirds rating it as the number-one problem. They also complained, some bitterly, about advising-counseling both in the community college and in the senior institution. In far too many cases, they reported that questions pertaining to transfer went unanswered in the community college and remained unanswered at the university. Some of the older students reported having confronted individuals whom they considered responsible for difficulties and, in their words, having demanded redress. Opening communication channels between adviser-counselors and students is certainly one of the continuing great challenges in higher education.

Transfer students are not alone in these complaints. Rising costs, the indifference of counselors and faculty, diminishing employment opportunities affect the entire student body. Institutions taking steps to ameliorate these situations would be helping native students as well as transfers.

Pressure and competition for good grades were often referred to in the free-response section. The impersonality of the university was frequently associated with this feeling of pressure. As a transfer enrolled in a northwestern university commented, "I'm lost in a rat race for good grades." One transfer in a midwestern university referred to himself as a "machine, not a person"; another described himself as "just one of thousands."

Virtually all respondents commenting on the social aspect of life on the university campus reported that it was considerably more difficult to form relationships with a close circle of friends than it was in community college. Professors were invariably harder to find and less inclined to spend time with students than their community college counterparts had been.

One encouraging sign was the rate of goal persistence. Fully 40 percent of the university transfer sampling pursued the same major from high school through admission to upper-division standing. Most persistent

dedication to career goals was apparent in the group transferring from community colleges in metropolitan areas. Compared to those moving from rural institutions, these students almost always continued in major fields decided on in high school. In contrast, many of the university group who transferred from rural community colleges had apparently no confirmed career goals. Some indicated that they preferred to wait as long as possible before declaring a major field.

The greatest concerns of community college students planning to transfer were the adviser-counseling system, comparative grading standards, prerequisites, and loss of credits. While reactions were undoubtedly based more on rumor and hearsay than on fact, here are some of their fears:

1. I understand that I won't be able to find my faculty adviser when I need help.
2. I will notice a difference in grading standards in the university; university professors will generally expect more work than their community college counterparts.
3. I fear that I won't complete prerequisites or requirements for the B.A. degree.
4. I will lose credits earned in my community college when attempting to transfer, especially vocational credits.
5. I hear that "D" grades and even other grades will not be accepted.
6. My community college doesn't offer all the lower-division courses I need.
7. I may have difficulty making friends and socializing.
8. The size of the university will bother me.

Similarity of reactions to quality questions, including reasons for attending a two-year college, and problems experienced or anticipated was a

striking characteristic of the study. Correlations of similarity in the 55 separate categories of both questionnaires ranged from .710 to .990.* Responses of transfers and pre-transfers in northwestern and western colleges and in universities and institutions in the East and South were most alike.

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*Total similarity is represented by a correlation of 1.0, half relationship by approximately .70.

Summary

Like other students, the transfer has a strong wish to belong. He wants to catch on without delay and to participate fully in campus life. Often alone, he faces a set of bewildering choices in his search for the best combination of many possibilities, both academic and personal, in the new environment.

Several factors unique to the transfer student are deterrents to his progress in the new society.

1. More than likely, he has attended a much smaller institution where the pace was slower and competition less severe, and has been conditioned to fear the bigness and impersonality (particularly the latter) of the university and to dislike intensely the thought of giving up his name for a number.
2. With few exceptions, his community college and the senior institution provide little preparation. Catalogs are no help. Usually, he picks up information and misinformation from other students, and is otherwise left to make his own adjustments.
3. Regardless of any official help provided, he is still joining the student body in midstream where competition in his major field heightens in upper-division work.
4. His confidence diminishes in proportion to constraining factors in the bookkeeping of transfer, i.e., loss of credits, lack of required courses for upper-division standing or prerequisites to continue his major field, incorrect course sequences, and additional graduation requirements normally taken in lower division.

Frequently, the transfer student arrives at the university with feelings of second-class citizenship. This suspicion tends to be confirmed as he gets

different opinions and wrong answers from counter clerks, secretaries, and even deans and registrars. He becomes more frustrated and distrustful with each episode. If these doubts become well grounded, the transfer student is apt to extend his suspicion and mistrust to adviser-counselors and to his professors. He may even decide to terminate his educational efforts, as one student wrote, "before the system has completely degraded my chances of learning."

Dissatisfaction with advising-counseling, both in the community college and university, including the lack of orientation plans was the clearest message from participants in the survey. Many referred to the lack of communication with adviser-counselors and the impression that the university system continued to concentrate on freshmen. Institutions need to give priority to these crucial areas.

Recommendations

One purpose of this Conference is to recommend alternate resolutions of problems faced by transfer students in a wide variety of colleges and universities and to arrange for testing them in specific institutions during the next calendar year. As Cross suggested:

> Precious little of what we do know has even been proved and perhaps nothing will be lost by acting upon some suggested assumptions.[21]

Recommendations--short-term and long-term--are presented in that spirit.

Short-term Considerations

This Conference was designed by the Association Transfer Group to be

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21. K. Patricia Cross. Beyond the Open Door, op.cit., p. xiv.

action-oriented. The planning group and the sponsoring agencies expect continuous spinoffs to result. Single institutions or groups of institutions, it is anticipated, will develop plans to ease, if not resolve, one or more of the transfer student issues.

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Reference has been made to specific attempts to tighten adviser-counselor and student communication, i.e., putting counselors nearer the scene of action, group advising where students take the leadership, buddy counseling, and official transfer student visits to community colleges. Such activity could be planned with comparative ease at almost any institution.
2. Examples of orientation programs could also be followed, i.e., Grossmont College's use of video-tape and the small-group orientation sessions at Flint Community Junior College. With comparatively little effort, similar improvements could be made at any college or university.
3. Transfer admission policies are seldom written down; even when they do appear, they are usually generalized, lacking specific detail. How much transfer credit, if any, is awarded for "work-study" and for "life experiences?" How are nonpunitive grading systems handled at the point of transfer? Such information could possibly be included in the document, "Report of Credit Given by Educational Institutions" published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. This report, an annual summary of credit acceptance policies, continues to be the accepted guide in a number of states. An expanded version of the AACRAO booklet containing guidelines for transfer

students could make a major contribution. Several student guide books to the two-year college are available, but except for materials that might be distributed locally by single institutions, nothing has as yet been published to benefit transfer students. Perhaps an AACRAO committee would like to work on this project.

Darrell H. Nicholson, registrar of Chowan College, North Carolina, has pointed the way with his publication entitled A Step Ahead. In this volume he has included transfer policies of about 150 senior colleges and universities and other material intended as a reference for counselors or students. Perhaps Mr. Nicholson would be interested in expanding his initial efforts to include additional information for students contemplating transfer.

Organizations with national influence on counseling and guidance practices (the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the American College Personnel Association are two) might be willing to develop materials designed for transfer student use; i.e., guidelines for out-of-state or inter-college transfers or model statements for use in counselor handbooks.

4. Information concerning admission credit and course acceptance, housing, jobs, parking, etc. is invariably late in reaching the transfer student. Much can be done to speed up these vital communications.
5. The transfer student reports serious difficulties in scheduling classes. Particularly if he is out of phase by calendar, he is

invariably last in the scheduling line. If this is an issue, something should be done in short order to ease the situation.

6. Some of the nontraditional programs that expand opportunities for transfer students were considered in the first section of this paper. These efforts should be generally endorsed, and community colleges and universities represented by this audience are challenged to participate in the programs--CLEP and CPEP examinations, USAFI courses, and the SOC program.

Long-term Considerations

1. We don't know enough about the transfer student. Investigations, including the comprehensive Trent study and the recent work of Cross, Knoell, Sundeen and Goodale, Willingham, Burt, and others have pointed the direction toward attitudinal and value-oriented studies. Transfer student reactions are vital to the progress of articulation plans. Since systematic investigations to assess transfer student reactions are needed, a series of case studies to give depth and breadth to individual student comments and simple anecdotes may be a promising methodology.
2. Articulation is necessarily a complex concept. Translation of the concept into action must serve a highly diverse and mobile clientele. Institutional, and where applicable, state articulation specialists--full-time trained ones--are needed. Few if any universities have programs, even portions of programs, to provide this expertise. Training programs for articulation specialists could be an important outcome of this Conference.

A sense of urgency exists. We must get on with the task of improving the lot of the transfer student.